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<b>(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US):</b> PHARMACIA & UPJOHN GRONINGEN BV [NL/NL]; P.O. Box 901, NL-9700 AX Groningen (NL).			
<b>(72) Inventors; and</b> <b>(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only):</b> HODD, Kenneth, A. [GB/GB]; 5 Rackery Hall Mews, Rackery Lane, Caer-Estyn, Wrexham LL12 0PB (GB). DILLINGHAM, Keith, Alfred [GB/NL]; Verlengde Grachtstraat, NL-9717 GG Groningen (NL). DE GROOT, Jaqueline [NL/NL]; Slotbrug 8, NL-9351 SR Leek (NL). HAITJEMA, Henrik [NL/NL]; Bolster 25, NL-9321 AT Peize (NL).		<b>Published</b> <i>With international search report. Before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of the receipt of amendments.</i>	
<b>(74) Agents:</b> FORSLUND, Niklas et al.; Pharmacia & Upjohn AB, S-112 87 Stockholm (SE).			

**(54) Title:** HYDROPHILIC MACROMOLECULAR COMPOUNDS

**(57) Abstract**

The invention relates to macromolecular hydrophilic photocrosslinkers having polymeric backbones of substituted ethylene groups carrying photoactive groups. The photocrosslinkers are capable of producing, when being exposed to light of determined wavelengths above 305 nm, radicals which are retained on the macromolecular photocrosslinkers and reacting so as to accomplish a crosslinked network structure. The invention further relates to the preparation of photocrosslinkers, their use in different aqueous systems and their utility in production of medical devices including ophthalmic lenses.